

While we are not in complete agreement with the judgment of administration officials, we have generally concurred with the recommendations of our current leaders.

I would like to remind the Members of the Senate that the Defense Department has been wrong on several occasions in recommending program terminations. Luckily the Congress has not always agreed with such proposals.

Let me give three examples, although we could spend all day relaying examples of mistakes by previous administrations.

First, the F-117 Stealth fighter. After producing only one squadron of F-117s the Air Force wanted to terminate the program which some in the Defense Department saw as a threat to the F-15E.

Congress continued to add funding for the program until two squadrons had been completely filled out.

Without the additional aircraft provided by the Congress, the Defense Department would have been woefully short of Stealth aircraft in conducting operations in Desert Storm and Bosnia.

Second, the first Bush administration fought very hard to kill the V-22 which today the Marine Corps considers one of its greatest assets.

Finally, I would remind my colleagues that shortly before Desert Shield-Desert Storm some in the Pentagon wanted to eliminate the Central Command. The view at the time was that we probably wouldn't need to focus much attention on South West Asia. This clearly demonstrates that our ability to predict hot spots and future threats is not perfect.

As we go forward today—killing the F-22, the VH-71 Presidential helicopter, the Combat Search and Rescue helicopter, the Kinetic Energy Interceptor, we do so with the hope that today's military and civilian leaders are better able to predict the future than some of their predecessors were.

The recommendations before the Senate provide our best judgment on the needs of our Nation for national security.

We have not provided funding for the closure of Guantanamo because the administration has yet to produce a credible plan. Instead we have included language which for all practical purposes is the same as was adopted by the Senate earlier this year.

We have adjusted funding for the littoral combat ship because the administration did not request sufficient funding to produce the quantity it requested.

On that subject, I must report that the administration has recently announced that it will only procure two LCS ships this year, which is the number that our committee has funded.

We have reapplied savings cut from unjustified amounts requested in the budget to programs that are better suited for funding.

For example, we have reduced amounts requested for Afghanistan security forces which the administration

has informed the committee cannot be spent in the coming year and transferred that amount to cover a shortfall in the critically needed MRAP program.

While we strongly concur with the administration that increased funding is required to train and equip our Afghan army and police forces, the amount that we recommend is nearly \$1 billion more than was provided for fiscal year 2009.

Moreover, my colleagues should be advised that the Defense Department has not yet spent nearly \$2 billion of the funds that are currently available for this program as we near the end of this fiscal year.

Notwithstanding the critical importance of funding for the Afghan security forces, it simply makes no sense to provide more funding than can be spent for this program when other shortfalls exist.

Along with our staffs we spend countless hours reviewing the programs and funding requests proposed by the administration. As you all know the defense budget is huge and it is extremely complex. There are thousands of acquisition and operations programs. In most cases the specific amounts requested for each of these programs was proposed by the military services more than a year ago.

During the intervening period many changes occur. It is not unusual for a program to be delayed or even terminated while a request is pending before the Congress.

As such, it is up to the subcommittee to make the necessary adjustments based on the latest information to ensure that the Nation is afforded the best use of the funds provided in this measure.

In so doing, we are recommending several program increases in this bill.

For example, we are recommending adding \$1.5 billion to provide for essential equipment for our National Guard and Reserve Forces.

We have also added funding to sustain our near term missile defense programs—like the AEGIS standard missile, THAAD radars, and ground based interceptors for testing.

We are recommending \$1.7 billion to purchase an additional DDG-51 Destroyer to put that restarted program on a more efficient and economical production schedule.

And we have added \$2.5 billion to sustain production of the C-17 program for one additional year. The administration has recently been provided with authority to retire the aging, hard to maintain, and often broken C-5A force.

We expect that in re-examining its airlift fleet the Defense Department will eventually conclude that purchasing additional C-17s and maintaining the strategic asset of a hot airlift production line is the right solution.

On the question of earmarks, as we described earlier this year, the committee has reduced the amount recommended for earmarks by \$300 mil-

lion or 10 percent from last year's recommendation.

In numbers, the committee has reduced the number of earmarks by nearly 200 fewer projects. We recognize that most members of the Senate will receive less than last year. We hope that our colleagues can support this package with its streamlined approach to earmarking.

Collectively, we believe the recommendations in this bill will provide for our Nation's defense and is far superior to the budget request submitted by the administration. Having had the time to review the suggestions of the administration carefully has afforded the subcommittee the opportunity to produce a better bill. I hope that all my colleagues can support the bill which was approved unanimously by the committee.

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I thank Chairman INOUE for his leadership and bipartisanship in putting together this legislation and moving it to the floor for consideration.

Two weeks ago, the Appropriations Committee unanimously approved this bill which provides over \$636 billion for Department of Defense operations for fiscal year 2010, including \$128 billion for overseas contingency operations. In compliance with committee allocation, this bill is \$3.9 billion below the President's budget request.

Given the allocation, the committee was forced to make tough decisions. This bill reflects a balanced recommendation which fully funds key readiness programs as well as providing for pay, housing allowance, medical care and family support for our men and women in uniform and their families.

Included in this bill is funding for requirements identified by the administration after the budget request was submitted. Funding is included to address the administration's budget amendment to grow the Army by an additional 22,200 personnel. Also included is an additional \$1.2 billion for 1400 mine resistant ambush protected vehicles that were recently identified as new requirements for our men and women serving in Afghanistan.

This bill also includes \$1.5 billion in the National Guard and Reserve Equipment account to help the Guard and Reserve components procure needed equipment. The Guard and Reserve continue to answer the call to duty. With over 140,000 Guard and Reserve personnel activated, we need to ensure they have the resources necessary to be ready to perform their Federal and State missions. This additional funding will help ensure the Guard and Reserve have the equipment they need.

I urge Senators to support the passage of this bill so we can make sure service members and their civilian colleagues in the Department of Defense have the funding they need to carry out their responsibilities. The men and women who wear our Nation's uniform make great sacrifices and one way to